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NEWS RELEASE

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Nethercutt says border personnel will double in Spokane region

WASHINGTON -- U.S. Rep. George Nethercutt (WA-05) announced today that the number of border security personnel working in the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) Spokane Sector will be doubled. This addition will grow the number of border patrol agents from 45 to 85, and will add two new administrators. The Spokane Sector runs from Oroville, Wash., to the Continental Divide in western Montana.

"These new agents are absolutely critical to both the security of Washington state and the country," said Nethercutt, who is co-chair of the Northern Border Caucus. "Our border patrol agents have been working exceptionally long hours to keep us safe, and they have done a fantastic job with the resources they have. The longest demilitarized border in the world is attractive to drug smugglers and others who may wish America ill. This security increase sends a clear message that Congress is serious about eliminating and deterring such activity."

Nethercutt said that Congress provided additional funding in last year's spending bills for Northern border security, including an authorization to triple the number of Border Patrol, INS inspectors and Customs Service at the Northern Border.

The addition of 42 new personnel will be part of 145 new border security personnel being added to the Washington state-Canadian border. This includes INS land-border inspectors, seaport inspectors, permanent Border Patrol Agents and a Special Agent in Charge of terrorism investigation. There are 128 border crossings along the 5,400-mile U.S.-Canadian border. The U.S. has roughly 2,200 personnel working at the border. Nearly \$1.3 billion worth of goods and 500,000 people cross the border each day.

"Today's news is reassuring for the people of Washington state," Nethercutt said. "Enhancing our border security is key to keeping our homeland secure."

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